

VZCZCXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAD #0095/01 0531139
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 221138Z FEB 10
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0343
INFO GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
OPEC COLLECTIVE
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0026
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 0013

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 000095

NOFORN
SIPDIS
STATE FOR S/SECC, NEA/ARP, EEB/ESC/IEC/ENR (MONOSSON, SECOR) AND OES/EGC (T HOMPSON)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2020/02/22
TAGS: SENV KGHG PREL AE
SUBJECT: UAE ASSOCIATES WITH COPENHAGEN ACCORD

REF: ABU DHABI 200; ABU DHABI 31

CLASSIFIED BY: Richard G. Olson, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C/NF) On February 14, the United Arab Emirates became the first OPEC member to associate with the Copenhagen Accord in a letter from Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Dr. Anwar Gargash to the UNFCCC (complete text below). Unusually, there was no UAEG press release on the decision and no local press coverage. Thani Al Zayoudi, a policy advisor at the Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company (Masdar) who also serves as Masdar's Director of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Department, told EconOff on February 22 that the UAE had kept its association low key for political reasons. He noted that Kuwait had rejected the Accord and that Saudi negotiator Al Sabban had told the UAE in a recent call that Saudi Arabia also planned to reject the Accord. Al Zayoudi said the UAE had discussed its plans to associate with other OPEC and Arab countries, and understood that Algeria was expected to associate soon. He added that the UAE expected other countries would follow suit, as happened when the UAE was the first to sign the Kyoto Protocol in 2005.

¶2. (C/NF) Comment: Given Abu Dhabi's strong interest in renewable energy and climate change issues, and the UAE's demonstrated willingness to act alone when appropriate , it is not surprising that the UAE has broken from OPEC ranks to associate. The low-key way the decision was taken is indicative of the sensitivities about the Copenhagen Accord within Arab and OPEC circles. Despite this, we may wish to call on the UAE to encourage other countries to associate. As demonstrated in its successful IRENA bid, the UAE has strong relationships with many developing countries and could be an ally for efforts to build support for the Accord. End Comment.

¶3. (U) Begin Text:

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Yvo de Boer Executive Secretary

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

PO Box 260 124

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in reference to the notification to the Parties to the UNFCCC, dated 18 January 2010, inviting those Parties that wish to be associated with the Copenhagen Accord to transmit relevant information to the Secretariat.

As demonstrated by both statements and actions, the UAE strongly supports the concept of equitable and coordinated international action to mitigate climate change, and the latter has initiated numerous domestic programs that would have the effect of bolstering the development of sustainable technologies and significantly reducing UAE emissions of greenhouse gases in comparison to projected Business-as-Usual (BAU) levels. The UAE looks forward to providing further details of its plans upon completion of required due diligence and internal analysis.

The UAE views the Copenhagen Accord as a political agreement and an important step towards an international legally-binding treaty, on the understanding that this progress will translate into the effective implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the extension of the Kyoto Protocol. Therefore, the UAE wishes to highlight the following:

¶11. The historical responsibility of Annex I countries regarding the state of the environment and the concept of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities should be maintained. As such, emissions reduction commitments by Annex I Parties should allow non-Annex I Parties equitable access to environmental space, enabling their economic and social development.

¶12. International action to mitigate climate change should minimize the adverse effects on international trade, and social, environmental and economic impacts on other Parties, especially non-Annex I Parties and in particular those identified in Article 4, paragraphs 8 and 9, of the Convention. This includes the effects of response measures on countries highly dependent on hydrocarbon revenues.

¶13. Existing market mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol and new market mechanisms should be available to provide flexibility in reaching the legally binding commitments of Annex I Parties and promoting sustainable development in non-Annex I Parties. For instance, the high mitigation potential of cleaner fossil fuel technologies, such as Carbon Capture and Storage, and alternative energy generation technologies, such as nuclear energy, should be promoted.

With the understanding of the above, I am delighted to convey the decision of the government of the United Arab Emirates to be associated with the Copenhagen Accord.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Anwar Gargash

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

United Arab Emirates

End Text.
OLSON